

## THE BASIC CONTENTS OF CONFUCIANISM IN THE HAN - NOM BOOK IN THE HISTORY OF VIETNAM

## O CONTEÚDO BÁSICO DO CONFUCIONISMO NO HAN - LIVRO NOM NA HISTÓRIA DO VIETNÃ\*

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**Abstract:** Confucianism originated in China and was spread into Vietnam in the 2nd century. During the process of existence and development, Confucianism was used by the feudal dynasties of Vietnam as the foundation of the superstructure, and become an effective tool in the management of the country. Confucianism has quickly penetrated into people's spiritual life, dominating all aspects of social life. Therefore, under the feudal dynasties of Vietnam, Confucianism used to hold an important position in fields such as politics, culture, history, etc. To spread the values of Confucianism, many documents about Confucianism have been printed and released; including documents on Han - Nom characters. Historically, documents of this kind have been very heavily printed and stored in the court and widely disseminated among the people. Through the ups and downs of history, these documents gradually disappear and are still very few today. These are valuable documents that help researchers to learn more clearly about the contents of Confucianism and its influence on history. Recognizing that importance, on the basis of studying Han - Nom documents on Confucianism still in existence up to this date, comparing and comparing with the works of previous, this study determined the contents of Confucianism recorded in Han - Nom documents, thereby determining the basic values of Confucianism and Han - Nom documents in history and present.

**Keywords:** Basic contents. Confucianism. Han - Nom book. Feudal dynasties of Vietnam. The historical.

**Resumo:** O confucionismo teve origem na China e foi difundido no Vietnã no século II. Durante o processo de existência e desenvolvimento, o confucionismo foi utilizado pelas dinastias feudais do Vietnã como base da superestrutura, e se tornou uma ferramenta eficaz na administração do país. O confucionismo penetrou rapidamente na vida espiritual das pessoas, dominando todos os aspectos da vida social. Portanto, sob as dinastias feudais do Vietnã, o confucionismo costumava ocupar uma posição importante em campos como política, cultura, história, etc. Para difundir os valores do Confucionismo, muitos documentos sobre o Confucionismo foram impressos e divulgados; incluindo documentos sobre caracteres Han - Nom. Historicamente, documentos deste tipo têm sido muito impressos e armazenados no tribunal e amplamente divulgados entre o povo. Através dos altos e baixos da história, estes documentos gradualmente desaparecem e ainda são muito poucos hoje. Estes são documentos valiosos que ajudam os pesquisadores a aprender mais claramente sobre o conteúdo do Confucionismo e sua influência na história. Reconhecendo essa importância, com base no estudo dos documentos Han - Nom sobre o Confucionismo ainda existentes até esta data, comparando e comparando com os trabalhos anteriores, este estudo determinou o conteúdo do Confucionismo registrado nos documentos Han - Nom, determinando assim os valores básicos do Confucionismo e dos documentos Han - Nom na história e no presente.

**Palavras-chave:** Conteúdo básico. Confucionismo. Han - Livro Nom. As dinastias feudais do Vietnã. O histórico.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Up to the present time, Vietnamese society is still deeply influenced by Confucianism thought. The process of receiving Chinese Confucianism in Vietnam has been going on for a long time and is complicated (Kim 1919; Giau 1973 & 1983). In the process, on the one hand, the Confucian officers from China and the Confucian officers in Vietnam actively spread Confucian ideas in the people's lives in many different forms; on the other hand, Confucian ideology must always struggle with other religions, to assert itself in the trend of tampering with the three religions (Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism) (Giau 1973; Thu 1997). When Confucianism became the dominant ideology in Vietnamese social life, Vietnamese Confucianists adopted the Confucian positive elements to build an independent, autonomous, and culturally bold national identity (Huu 1988; Hinh 2007). One of the activities of Vietnamese Confucians in the process of spreading Confucian ideas is to compile works to disseminate in the people's lives through the education and training of Confucian generations in Vietnam.

The bibliographies written in Chinese and Vietnamese Nom script for the purpose of propagating Confucian political ideas and culture in Vietnam are still preserved in large volumes, with rich content and genres diversity (Vuong & Tan 1960). Based on the content, these bibliographies can be divided into several categories as follows: introductory documents, training materials documents, classic documents, literature documents of the exam, etc. (Han - Nom Research Institute 1993).

In the next feudal dynasties from the tenth century to the early years of the twentieth century, the bibliographies on Confucianism, especially the Four Books and the Five Sutras, increasingly attracted Vietnamese scholars who were interested in commenting, such as Chu Van An, Nguyen Trai, Nguyen Binh Khiem, Phung Khac Khoan, Le Qui Don, Pham Qui Thich, Phan Huy Chu, etc. The number of authors is increasing and the work of commentary is increasing. The generations of Vietnamese Confucianism, with all their admiration and respect, focused on interpreting the Chinese Confucian Sutras, especially for the Four Books and the Five Sutras, so these two volumes had a great influence major in educational cultural life in Vietnam (Kim 1919). Many Vietnamese Confucian works written in Chinese and Nom characters have taken the Four Books and the Five Sutras as direct or indirect objects to study and interpret Confucian thought.

We have had many works on Confucianism by famous scholars, published during the twentieth century, in which many Confucian problems were recognized and entered into a summary trend. However, there is the fact that the documents on Vietnamese Confucianism written in Han - Nom character have never been statistically, described, and have never been exploited, and translated systematically. And so, this leads to the ineffective not use of this bookstore in assessing the values of Confucianism in the past as well as its influences in the present. Of the Confucian records, the Han - Nom documents are of the utmost importance, for they were compiled during the prevailing Confucian period, and are the most direct evidence of Confucianism in history.

The problem of compiling a comprehensive bibliography on Confucianism has also been noted. In 1973, such a bibliography was completed at the Hanoi Library of Social Sciences, in retrospective form. In this directory, there are 4 sections of documents: Vietnamese documents (53 names of documents), French documents (63 names of documents), Japanese documents (14 names of documents), and documents in Han - Nom characters (82 names of documents). These are only documents on Confucianism at the Hanoi Library of Social Sciences, and selected documents follow narrow criteria.

Recognizing the significance of the Han - Nom bibliographies on Confucianism, we went into research on the Han - Nom books to find out more deeply the contents of Confucianism identified in these documents, from there more materials to help the study of Confucianism in Vietnam more rich and accurate. The article is based on the aforementioned bibliography, the scope of the material in our article and bibliography is to refer to documents at the Han - Nom Research Institute that has been described in the Vietnamese Han - Nom Heritage book - Bibliography and initial comments on this matter.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Currently, the Han-Nom books still preserved in Vietnam are precious documents that are kept very carefully at the Institute of Han-Nom Studies. Therefore, in order to access these Han - Nom books, the author has to go directly to the Institute of Han - Nom Studies to collect and research.

However, due to the limitation of language ability, many documents are written in Han - Nom, so I cannot read and fully understand its meaning. Therefore, I had to ask my colleagues at the Institute of Han - Nom Research translation and Interpretation for help.

In addition, there are a number of Han-Nom texts that have been translated into the national language (the language in use in Vietnam, is Vietnamese) that I have consulted, especially the Han-Nom texts that have written about the basic contents of Confucianism.

Moreover, at present, some traditional cultural research centers still keep a number of woodblocks engraved with Confucianism contents, which have also been collected, translated, and asked by colleagues fluent in Han - Nom language, editing, and commenting.

The statistics of the basic contents of Confucianism are shown in 5,083 books with 30,000 documents referenced by the author from the statistics of the Han - Nom Research Institute.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### ***3.1. What is Han - Nom?***

Until the beginning of the 20th century, literature, governmental, scholarly, and religious (Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism) documents, steles, and temple, pagoda signs of Vietnam were written in characters Chinese (Vietnamese call: “cổ văn” 古文 or “văn ngôn” 文言), using characters Chinese or “Chữ Hán”. This had been done since at least 111 BC (Tai, 2002). In the process of using Chinese characters, Vietnamese people created a new type, and called “Chữ Nôm” or “Hán Nôm”.

Regarding the time of appearance of “Chữ Nôm”, no specific sources have been recorded, however, there are some views that since as early as the 8th-century novels and poetry in Vietnamese were also written in the “Chữ Nôm” script, which used Chinese characters for Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary and an adapted set of characters for the native vocabulary with Vietnamese approximations of middle Chinese pronunciations (Can, 2002). The two scripts coexisted until the era of French Indochina when the Latin alphabet “Quốc Ngữ” script gradually became the written medium of both government and popular literature.

Since 111 BC (Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư, 1697), Vietnam has been ruled by Chinese feudal dynasties. The Vietnamese people call this the Northern domination period (Bắc thuộc). During the Chinese domination period from 111 BC to 938 AD, Vietnam was under Chinese rule and so Chinese

characters or Chử Hán (Hanzi) were used for writing, speak. In most cases, formal writings of the officials who ruled China were done in the language of Classical Chinese (“văn ngôn” - 文言, “cổ văn”, or “Chử Nho”, which are usually used as synonyms with “Chử Hán” - Chinese characters (Anh, 2005).

“Chử Hán” was used extensively in government and administration, especially for entry via the Confucianism examination system in Vietnam, which was conducted solely in “văn ngôn”. Chinese was also the language of medicine, astrology, religion, science, and high literature such as poetry (Anh, 2005). Vietnam started to have Chinese studies when Shi Xie (137–226) taught Vietnamese people to write. In this period of over a thousand years, most of the inscriptions written on steles are in Chinese characters (Anh 2005).

During this period, Vietnamese existed mainly as an oral language, before the creation of the “Chử Nôm” script to preserve and circulate less serious poetry and narrative literature. These writings were at first indistinguishable from contemporaneous classical Chinese works produced in China, Korea, or Japan. These include the first poems in “Chử Nho” by the monk Khuong Viet (匡越), the “Nam Quốc Sơn Hà” poem (南國山河) by Ly Thuong Kiet (Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư, 1697), and many scriptures of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism (Coedes, 1966; Can, 2002).

In 938, Ngo Quyen defeated the army of the Southern Han Dynasty on the Bach Dang River (Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư, 1697), opening the period of independence and autonomy of Vietnam. Starting from here, the feudal dynasties of Vietnam affirmed the independence of the country, separated from the rule of Chinese feudal dynasties; build its own culture, including writing the word (Giau 1973). The Ly Dynasty (1009–1225) (Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư, 1697) was considered to be the prosperous dynasty of Vietnam, the culture of this period flourished, but basically, “Chử Hán” was still used mainly in poetry and administrative documents of the country.

Sometime during the 10th century, the Vietnamese adopted the Chinese script to write their own language and called their script “Chử Nôm” (southern script). From the 13th century, the dominance of “Chử Hán” began to be challenged by “Chử Nôm”, a system of modified and invented characters modeled loosely on Chinese characters. The “Chử Nôm” - unlike the system of “Chử Nho” - allowed for the expression of purely Vietnamese words, was created in Vietnam at least as early as the 13th century (Nghia 1983). However, the earliest known use of the “Chử Nôm” is documented to be from the 8th century (Can 2002). The oldest vestige of Nôm scripts can be seen now is that the words “Mr. Hà”

appeared in a “Hán” document engraved on the bell of the pagoda in Do Son (Hai Phong city today). The bell was cast in the year of “Bính Thìn” (Year of the dragon) (1076) of King Ly Nhan Tongs’ reign, currently stored in the Vietnam Museum of History in Hanoi (today) (Nghia 1983); a stele at the Bao An Pagoda in Yen Lang, Vinh Phu province, dates from 1209 AD (Ly Dynasty). It was during the Tan Dynasty (late 13th century) that the script was systematized and started to be used in literature.

While designed for native Vietnamese speakers, “Chữ Nôm” required the user to have a fair knowledge of “Chữ Hán”, and thus “Chữ Nôm” was used primarily for literary writings by cultural elites. Famous Vietnamese writers who wrote in the Chữ-nôm script include the poets Nguyen Thuyen and Nguyen Si Co (14th century) and Nguyen Trai (15th century), and Ho Quy Ly (14th century) who translated Chinese textbooks into Vietnamese and wrote royal proclamations and ordinances. In the 18th century, there were poets such as the poetry of Nguyen Du, Ho Xuan Huong, Doan Thi Diem, while almost all other official writings and documents continued to be written in classical Chinese until the 20th century (Tai, 2002). Though technically different from “Chữ Hán”, it is simplest to think of it as a descendant of “Chữ Hán” - with modifications thereof as well as new Vietnamese-coined logograms, together, they are called “Hán Nôm” (Han - Nom).

When western missionaries starting arriving in Vietnam during the 17th century, they developed a new script for Vietnamese based on the Latin alphabet - Quốc Ngữ (National language), which they used to write prayer books and other religious material in Vietnamese. Though “Quốc Ngữ” was developed by a number of different missionaries and by Vietnamese scholars, the person usually credited with its invention is Alexandre de Rhodes, a French Jesuit missionary.

In the mid-18th century, some schools in Vietnam began to teach “Quốc Ngữ”, but it wasn’t until the beginning of the 20th century that the use of “Quốc Ngữ” became widespread. Today “Quốc Ngữ” is the only script used for writing Vietnamese. Courses in the “Chữ Nôm” script were available at some Universities in Ho Chi Minh City until 1993, and the script is still studied and taught at the Han-Nom Research Institute in Hanoi, which has recently published a dictionary of all the “Nôm” characters.

Such, “Chữ Nôm” uses a mixture of standard Chinese characters and new characters invented specifically for writing Vietnamese. When adapting the Chinese characters, the inventors of “Chữ Nôm” borrowed many Chinese words and adapted that pronunciations to Vietnamese phonology (Huong, 1996). As a result of this borrowing, there are often two words for the same thing - a Sino-Vietnamese

one and the original Vietnamese one, as can be seen below. The new characters combine a character that gives the meaning and another which hints at the Vietnamese pronunciation.

### **3.2. Han - Nom Books**

Vietnam has many valuable Han - Nom literary works on historical and medicinal topics that have saved lives in the past. These collections were left to us by our ancestors. For thousands of years, Han - Nom were the scripts used to record Viet Nam's culture, history, science, and religion. Despite its importance to the Vietnamese people, it has not been given proper attention by cultural authorities

There are currently no complete statistics on the number of Han - Nom books in Vietnam. To make statistics of the Han - Nom book system is a difficult task, requiring those who do it not only to know the history but also to be good at Han - Nom characters. As a result, very few people have done this work, both in history and today (Chi, 2011).

In Vietnam, the first Han - Nom book directories were “Ngê Văn Chí” by Le Quy Don and “Văn Tịch Chí” by Phan Huy Chu. After that, excluding the Han - Nom book directories by French compiled about Vietnam, Tran Van Giap is the third person to compile an integrated ethnic directory on a large scale and with the book “Understanding Han - Nom bookstore” published on 1971 consisted of typical works of Vietnam from the 11th to the beginning of the twentieth century in “Chữ Hán” and “Chữ Nôm” (Chi, 2011).

Tran Van Giap had a great deal of “Chữ Hán”, and studies Chinese history, so he was very knowledgeable about the Eastern bibliography. He again studied bibliography in France and mastered the method of Western learning. But when applied to the practice of bibliographic compilation, Tran Van Giap has returned to the national roots to inherit and develop the country's academic background. Talking about the inheritance of the previous researchers, Tran Van Giap wrote in his bibliography: “Composing this booklet, I take the two books of Le Quy Don and Phan Huy Chu as the original” (Giap, 1971).

Through the research of the research as mentioned above, it can be said that the system of Han - Nom books in Vietnam is very rich and diverse, unable to fully appreciate its value and importance for the history, politics, and culture of Vietnam. With the initial approach, we can generalize the system of Han-Nom books in Vietnam including the following contents:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| I - History    | V - Literature |
| II - Geography | VI - Religion  |



III - Technique

VII - Philosophy

IV - Language

VIII - Comprehensive book

The Han - Nom book alone, which is being archived at the Han - Nom Research Institute (1993), has been 5,083 book titles with 30,000 documents. Currently, there are many Han-Nom books of Vietnam that are being stored in foreign countries, therefore, no conditions for full statistics. May include the name of some typical Han - Nom book titles:

“Việt điện u linh” book of Ly Te Xuyen;

“Lĩnh Nam chích quái” book of Vu Quynh;

“Nghê văn chí” book of Le Quy Don;

“Văn tịch chí” book of Phan Huy Chu;

The book of “Bản quốc thiên môn kinh bản” and “Phụng chiếu cần pháp” of An Thien, etc.

Above is the original and direct document for research on Vietnamese Confucianism in history. The appearance of these documents in Vietnam is an issue worth studying, in which there are some in-depth suggestions such as: What was the first classic work of Confucianism in Vietnam? How do Sutras come to Vietnam? During the entire history of Vietnam, what time and dynasties appeared the most Confucian works and why? How did the ancients discuss sutras or Sutras summaries? What are the basic contents of Confucianism in the Han - Nom books? What are they used for?

### ***3.3. Confucianism in Han - Nom Books at Vietnam***

#### ***The literature on Confucianism scriptures (81 documents)***

We have had many studies on Confucianism of famous scholars, published throughout the 20th century and early 21st century, in which many issues of Confucianism were recognized and put into the summary trend. However, there is a fact that documents on Vietnamese Confucianism written in Han - Nom characters have never been listed, described and have never been systematically explored or translated. As a result, it has not effectively used these books in assessing past Confucian values as well as current influences.

Among the documents on Confucianism in Vietnam, documents written in Han - Nom scripts are of the utmost importance, because they were compiled during the feudatory dynasties of Vietnam, and is the most direct evidence of Confucianism in history (Dien, 2005). Confucianism documents were printed to serve the activities of spreading religions, political guidelines, rule of the country, etc of feudal



kings. At the same time, it is also the essays, poems or ethical standards of Confucianism that everyone in society must follow.

Currently, the Han - Nom documents on Confucianism is kept in many places such as: in the big lineages, there were many successful people in examinations (doctorate, poinsettia) during feudal dynasties of Vietnam or in communal houses, temple, pagodas, etc.; no condition to research. However, the largest place to store Han - Nom documents about Confucianism in Vietnam is the Han - Nom Research Institute (Dien, 2005). The Han - Nom Research Institute has been hosting the largest volume of Han - Nom documents in Vietnam; where according to the statistics may be incomplete, there are 1.689 titles of Confucianism documents, divided into the following groups:

This is an original and direct document for studying Vietnamese Confucianism in history. The appearance of these documents in Vietnam is a matter worth studying, including some in-depth suggestions such as: What was the first Confucianism Sutras into Vietnam? How does a classic work come to Vietnam? Throughout the history of Vietnam, what time, dynasty appeared most Confucianism works and why? How did the ancients discuss the scriptures or recapitulate them? There are 81 the Confucianism scriptures, among them:

- About “Tứ Thư” (Four Book): 14 documents;
- About “Ngũ Kinh” (Five Sutras): 19 documents,
- Summary of the Confucianism scriptures (overview, details): 15 documents;
- Note and explain of the Confucianism scriptures: 15 documents;
- Translation of the classic into the national language (Chữ Nôm): 25 documents;
- Commentary on the Confucianism scriptures: 9 documents;
- Discussing the Sutras in the form of books: 150 titles.

In this document section, we see famous authors in the eighteenth century such as Ngo Thi Nham with “Xuân Thu giản kiến”, Le Quy Don with “Tứ Thư ước giải”, Pham Nguyen Du with “Luận Ngũ ngu án”, etc, very in-depth discussion of Confucianism thought and related aspects.

### ***The document reflects the influence of Confucianism in Vietnam***

This issue has up to 1,608 documents, covering many areas in the over life such as literature, education, morality, law, political regime, history, and rituals. Below will cover each of the above fields:

- Confucianism literature (1.246 documents):

Confucianism literature is literature created by Confucian intellectuals, based on ideas and aesthetics from the Confucianism perspective. These are literary works written in many different genres, among authors with big names recorded in Vietnamese literature such as: Nguyen Trai, Le Thanh Tong, Nguyen Binh Khiem, Doan Thi Diem, Le Quy Don, Ngo Thi Nham, Nguyen Du, King Tu Duc, Nguyen Khuyen, Cao Ba Quat, Chu Manh Trinh, etc.

In this section, we pay special attention to the epic poem - a very popular topic in medieval literature, inspired by the history of Vietnam and China (Dien, 2005). However, different from a chronicle or a historical work in which chronology, the writer's carefulness, and seriousness are put to the forefront, the epic poem evaluates and comments on a character or certain historical events with literary imagery and poetry (Van, et al., 2020). Thereby the author draws lessons, serves as a mirror and submits his view of human life. The choice of a character or historical event does not entirely depend on the stature of the character or the event but on the writer's own inspiration. This is a very useful document for the study of literature and ideology of Vietnam in the past.

Currently, The Han - Nom Research Institute stores 112 documents of epic poem history. The book gathers the most poetic works of epic history, the poems of history compilation (1 manuscript, 246 pages, VHv1785). This book has been Duong Thuc Hiep write the preface in the year of the Tiger, King Thanh Thais' reign (1902), including 900 Han - Nom poems written by Vietnamese authors as Pham Vy Khiem, Nguyen Duc Dat, Duong Thuc Hiep, etc.

- Confucianism education and examinations (537 documents):

Choosing talented people to enter the state bureaucracy under feudal dynasties through academic contests is a common practice in China and East Asian countries, which are influenced by Confucianism (Giau, 1973). The Confucianism examination system creates conditions for all people to have the opportunity to show their talents and educational attainment, which is one of the preeminent policies of these countries and was praised. However, study method the “tầm chương, trích cú” (mainly studying in books, specifically here learning Confucianism scriptures), cliches and stereotypes have hindered the development of natural science and technology in these countries in the past (Dien, 2005).

Statistics show that there are up to 439 documents on exams. Among these, there are 332 documents that are collections of sample papers as references for learners to take the exam; only 1 book talks about the test system and 30 books mention the testing method and examination regulations. Textbooks have only 22 books, mostly books compiled by “Ban Tú Thư” in Hue to teach students in a

new way in the early twentieth century, following the guidelines of Duong Lam, Doan Trien, Bui Huong Thanh, and Do Van Tam.

During the Confucian examinations, those who took the exam had the desire to be listed on “bảng vàng”, the name was engraved on “bảng vàng” (A type of board painted with gilded vermilion to write the names of those who passed exams in feudal times), forever with reputation, all aspired to dedicate to the court and country. The names and hometowns of those who pass in Confucianism contests are recorded in a document called “Đăng Khoa Lục” (a book for information about those who pass the Confucianism examinations). Currently, the Han - Nom Research Institute stores 78 documents (documents which were divided into several books). In, 38 books were used to compile into the book Vietnam scientists from 1075 to 1919, edited by Ngo Duc Tho (1993), Information Literature Publishing House with the most essential information about Vietnamese Confucianism intellectuals who passed the doctorate examination, in the “đại khoa” examination (ie Hoi and Dinh exams) organized by the court.

Regarding Confucian education, we also have to mention documents about the “Văn Miếu” which are cultural institutions for honoring Confucius - the “Vạn thế sư biểu” (the teacher of eternity and forever) of Confucianism, and “Quốc Tử Giám” which a place to train elite people with educational prospects for nation. Statistics show that there are 20 documents talking about the “Văn Miếu”, including “Văn Miếu” at Hanoi, “Văn Miếu” at Hue city, and “Văn Miếu” at the provinces; there are 9 documents on the “Quốc Tử Giám” at Hanoi and Hue (today).

-Confucian morality (134 documents):

Confucianism morality was also a prominent issue in the bibliography of the Han - Nom Research Institute. And according to statistics, the Han - Nom Research Institute is hosting 134 documents on this issue. Materials of this type include (1) The stories of benevolent sages, famous Confucian scholars, and stories of filial piety; (2) The ethics of mandarins; (3) Books on traditional families, etc.

In the literature on Confucianism morality, we pay special attention to the traditional family problem that Tran Dinh Huu (1988) has had many useful and important research and conclusions. The Han - Nom Research Institute currently has 61 titles about traditional families, not to mention the 264 genealogy books of the lineages. Among the above documents, there are 51 documents educate ethical standards in families and lineages (Gia huấn book).

Regarding educating ethical standards in families and lineages, in Han - Nom Journal 3 (28) (1996), the author Le Thu Huong announced that there were about 34 titles of documents. The earliest training version that Han - Nom Research Institute has kept is “Cùng đạt gia huấn” (VHv.286). This is a manuscript, dating to 1.733, written by Ho Phi Tich. This book copies the lessons learned in his life, teaching his children and grandchildren to maintain order, knowing how to be frugal, careful, and humble, avoid being arrogant, luxurious, immersed in alcohol and gambling, etc.

In general, the “Gia huấn” book sets out standards of family behavior such as father, son, husband, brother, or extended in social relationships (neighborly relations, friends). Some of the documents also mentioned sex education for boys and girls (Hành tham quan gia huấn, Nữ huấn tam tữ thư and Xuân đĩnh gia huấn). As for educating ethical standards for women, there are 10 documents.

- Law and rule of the feudal dynasties of Vietnam (in particular, the Nguyen Dynasty) (191 documents):

After gaining independence, the feudal state of Vietnam immediately paid attention to the construction of the legal system. According to the records of the history books and the book of “Văn tịch chí” (the book chronicles the laws that have been used in history), right from the Ly Dynasty (XI century), Vietnam had the “Hình Thư” law, and the Tran Dynasty (XIII century) had the “Quốc Triều Hình Luật” Law. Later, we also know about other laws compiled such as “Thiên Nam dư hạ tập”, “Quốc triều hình luật” (Hong Duc Law), “Quốc triều chiếu lệnh thiện chính thư”, “Quốc triều khám tụng điều lệ” which were composed under the Later Le Dynasty (XV century); “Hồng Đức thiện chính thư” was composed under the Mac Dynasty (XVI century); “Hoàng Việt luật lệ” Law (Gia Long Law) was composed under the Nguyen Dynasty (XIX century). The Han - Nom Research Institute currently stores 40 documents related to feudal Vietnamese law, including the two laws of Hong Duc and Gia Long.

Vietnam does not have a set of laws written in Nom script, but currently, there are 4 books (AB.321; VNv.123/1-3; VNv.98/1-2-4) which are texts interpreting the laws by “Chữ Nôm” for the purpose of disseminating the law in the general public and in society, was composed under the Nguyen Dynasty.

About the rule: It can be said that throughout Vietnam’s history (about a thousand years), feudal dynasties of Vietnam ruled the country under the central state regime, focusing power on the king, which

was prescribed by Confucianism institutions; in which the king is considered “Thiên tử” (son of heaven) (Van & Luong 2019). Documents classified in this section include (Dien 2005):

- (1) Administrative documents exchanged between kings and mandarins;
- (2) How to organize the system of government and officials of all generations;
- (3) Provisions on reward and discipline. Studying this group of documents, we will see how the dynasties of Vietnam governed the country, and if there is a comparison with China, Korea, and Japan, we can draw many useful comments.

-About historical documents and ceremonies and rituals of Confucianism

About historical documents: In the bookshelf of the Han - Nom Research Institute, there are many historical documents, including accuracy history, pseudohistory history, “dật sử” (the book chronicles the things that history does not record (due to omission or for any reason not mentioned), etc. However, in our directory, only 22 documents (Dien, 2005). These are documents in which it is clearly stated historical views of feudal historians, in particular:

- (1) Approach to historical sources (Vietnamese history, Chinese history, pseudohistory history, legend);
- (2) How to present the event (select the event and put it in the text or give down the appendix);
- (3) Comments, and reviews on historical events and figures.

About ceremonies and rituals of Confucianism: This group of documents refers to official or orthodox Confucianism ceremonies and rituals, including:

- (1) Imperial and royal ceremonies (celebration of longevity, coronation, ordination, ceremony giving books and budgets to the royal family);
- (2) The sacrifice of the gods, worshiping the previous kings and worshiping the heavens and the earth (“Nam Giao” sacrifice, “Thái Miếu” sacrifice, “Cung Miếu” worship - under the Trinh Dynasties, to sacrifice to the ancestors of Lord Trinh), and “Văn Miếu” sacrifice (worship saints of Confucianism), the ordain for the gods (tutelary god, mountain god, river god, heroes of national, etc.);
- (3) The ordain processes for meritorious officials and the people.

The documents of Confucianism ceremonies and rituals are important in the study of the history of dynasties, such as the local administrative literature, the change of etiquette over generations, rituals

that took place at the court, the state's reward for people with merit, the appointment of officials, the state's recognition to the gods, etc.

Thus, according to statistics (Dien, 2025), Confucianism documents account for a very large proportion in the Han - Nom Research Institute's bookstore: 1,689/5,038 documents titles in the entire bookstore. Of these, the most are Confucianism literature: 1,246/1,689 documents titles, followed by Confucianism education: 537/1,689 documents titles.

It is clear that the Han - Nom Research Institute is hosting a very rich, diverse, and important amount of information about Confucianism. They must clearly reflect the refraction of Confucianism in Vietnam, expressed in many aspects: ideology, philosophy, literature, ethics, and law; and thus is the basis for the study of Confucian and Confucianism comparisons between Vietnam and countries such as China, Korea, and Japan in the past.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

In the current globalization context and trend, all ethnic groups are in the process of rediscovering their cultural and spiritual values to contribute to the treasure of human heritage. These heritages both affirm the unity of human culture and express the diversity and rich beauty of cultures of ethnic groups living in the world. In such a sense, the Han - Nom heritage is an integral part of the spiritual heritage of the peoples of Vietnam. Han - Nom's bibliography has a life of its own in the endless flow of Vietnamese culture, becoming a message passed from generation to generation, with its style, tone, and bold mentality of Vietnamese charges.

The flow of Vietnamese culture still flows smoothly from ancient times to the present, but the Han-Nom bibliographic flow stopped a hundred years ago and was replaced it with a Vietnamese national script. Accessing, researching, and decoding the messages of his father in the Han - Nom heritage store is becoming an urgent matter. That is the best way not to allow textual discontinuity to entail traditional discontinuity. In order to do this well, first of all, it is necessary to carry out the inventory of this heritage capital (both at home and abroad), as a basis for planning future exploitation and translation, as well as to effectively manage this legacy warehouse.

In that sense, my bibliographies and articles are initial, contributing to the joint effort of all of us. I still hope that in the near future a complete, most scientific, and useful bibliography set on Confucians

and Confucianism will be compiled, as a tool for all who are interested in the matter this. In order to do that, I believe that there must be the collaboration of experts from different fields, the cooperation of international friends in research institutions, and archives around the world, and the help financial and technical facilities of organizations and individuals inside and outside Vietnam.

The literature on Confucians and Confucianism has been a spiritual legacy of our ancestors, and a thorough study of this heritage will give us historical experiences, as well as very specific measures in promoting the quintessence of Confucians and Confucianism in today's modern society.

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